

Applied Business

OCR GCSE in Applied Business J213

OCR GCSE (Double Award) in Applied Business J226

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1 About these Qualifications

This booklet contains OCR's GCSE (Single Award) and GCSE (Double Award) specification in Applied Business for teaching from September 2009.

The specification builds upon the broad educational framework set out in the subject criteria for GCSEs from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

Allowing for two exit points within the specification this GCSE gives the candidate an introduction to the world of business. It is designed to enable candidates to make valid personal choices upon completion of the course and to progress to further education, training or employment.

This GCSE is ideal specification for those candidates wanting a broad background in the subject area. The course of study prescribed by these specifications can reasonably be undertaken by a candidate entering this vocational area for the first time. It provides a suitable basis for further study in this subject or for related courses which could include GCEs, OCR Nationals, NVQs or Diplomas. It is designed to be delivered in full-time or part-time education and the units of these specifications can be delivered one by one or in a more holistic manner.

Examples of appropriate employment to which a GCSE candidate in this subject area might progress include customer service assistant, office assistant, sales operative or administration officer.

Key Skills are integral to this specification and opportunities to provide evidence for the separate Key Skills qualifications are signposted.

The fundamental philosophy of this specification is that in order for the candidate to understand the nature of business, they need to experience the business environment for themselves. This will be achieved through the study of, and participation in, a series of vocationally related activities. Contact with the business environment can be achieved through a variety of approaches including work experience, links with local employers, case studies, research and invited speakers. It is not advised that this specification is delivered in an 'academic' manner and teachers must be aware of the requirements involved in both the planning, delivery and assessment styles of this type of specification.

The specification has been designed to provide a range of teaching, learning and assessment styles to motivate the candidate to achieve the best they can and to empower them to take charge of their own personalised learning and development. Assessment is designed to give credit for what the candidate can do as well as what they know. It is based both on internally and externally assessed evidence which it is hoped will provide both an engaging and exciting experience for the candidate.

OCR has taken great care in the preparation of these specifications to avoid bias of any kind.

1.1 GCSE (Single Award)

The GCSE (Single Award) is both a ‘stand-alone’ qualification and also the first half of the corresponding GCSE (Double Award).

From September 2009 the GCSE (Single Award) is made up of two mandatory units. One unit is externally assessed and one unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

1.2 GCSE (Double Award)

From September 2009 the GCSE (Double Award) is made up of four mandatory units which are the corresponding GCSE (Single Award) and two further units. Two units are externally assessed and two units are internally assessed and externally moderated.

1.3 Qualification Titles and Levels

These qualifications are shown on a certificate as:

OCR GCSE in Applied Business;

OCR GCSE (Double Award) in Applied Business.

These qualifications are approved by the regulatory authorities (QCA, DCELLS and CCEA) as part of the National Qualifications Framework.

Candidates who gain Grades D to G (**CD** to **GG**) will have achieved an award at Foundation Level 1 (Level 1 of the National Qualifications Framework).

Candidates who gain Grades A* to C (A*A* to CC) will have achieved an award at Intermediate Level 2 (Level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework).

1.4 Aims and Learning Outcomes

The aims of these specifications are to:

- encourage the learner to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and gain an insight into related sectors. It should prepare the learner to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and careers choices;
- raise awareness of cultural diversity.

The specification must enable the learner to:

- actively engage in the study of business and economics to develop as effective and independent candidates and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds;
- use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts and opinions, to build arguments and make informed judgements;
- develop and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts;
- appreciate the range of perspectives of different stakeholders in relation to business and economic activities;
- consider the extent to which business and economic activity can be ethical and sustainable.

1.5 Prior Learning/Attainment

Candidates entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to National Curriculum Level 3, or an Entry 3 at Entry Level within the National Qualifications Framework.

2 Summary of Content

2.1 GCSE (Single Award) Units

Unit A241: *Business in action*

- Business type – forms of ownership
- Business activity – why and how businesses start, succeed and/or fail
- Framework for activity – aims, objectives and mission statements
- Stakeholders - the differing interests
- Employers/employees – how they operate in enterprising ways, develop their working relationships and meet their various rights and responsibilities
- Changing use of ICT – in business and economic activities
- Uncertainty – risk, reward and change
- Business within society – ethics and sustainability
- Use of relevant terms, concepts and methods – to understand business and economic behaviour

The candidate in this unit will be expected to develop their knowledge and understanding of the unit content through the investigation of a range of local and/or national business organisations.

Unit A242: *Making your mark in business*

- Stakeholders - the differing interests
- Competition – reaction, recognition, actual and potential
- Customers – their power, importance and needs
- Decision making – use of data and problem solving
- Practical skills – time management, personal organisation and action planning
- Presentational skills – addressing audiences using a variety of media and forms
- Personal skills – showing evidence of progression
- Interpersonal skills – communication and group work
- Cognitive skills – reflection and review of own and others' performances

This content is presented in a holistic manner in Unit A242. Each of the bullet points listed above can be located across the following sub-sections:

Getting organised	Understanding the market	Stakeholder interest	Presenting data effectively
The marketing mix/promoting an idea	Costing implications	Reflection and review	

2.2 GCSE (Double Award) Units

Unit A241: *Business in action*

- Business type – forms of ownership
- Business activity – why and how businesses start, succeed and/or fail
- Framework for activity – aims, objectives and mission statements
- Stakeholders – the differing interests
- Employers/employees – how they operate in enterprising ways, develop their working relationships and meet their various rights and responsibilities
- Changing use of ICT – in business and economic activities
- Uncertainty – risk, reward and change
- Business within society – ethics and sustainability
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The marketing mix/promoting an idea	Costing implications	Reflection and review	

Unit A243: Working in business

- Business structure – how businesses organise themselves
- Job roles - key activities and responsibilities
- Working together
- Forms of communication
- Functional areas within businesses and associated activities:

Finance	Marketing and Sales	
Administration and ICT	Customer Service	Production

Unit A244: Business and you

- The Human Resources functional area
- The recruitment process
- The selection process
- Human resources legislation
- Induction
- Promotion – training, skills, competencies required
- Effective research

3 Content

3.1 Unit A241: *Business in action*

Businesses must never stand still. In today's world businesses must constantly react to the internal and external environment in which they find themselves operating. With advances in technology and ever increasing competition, businesses must constantly review and update their procedures to ensure they stay that one step ahead. This may mean taking risks or moving the business in an entirely new direction. The rewards can, however, be great.

In this unit the candidate will investigate different types of businesses in action. The candidate will look at a series of business contexts to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of how businesses operate in today's world.

Although no indication is given of the number of businesses which need to be studied, it is important that businesses are selected which enable the candidate to demonstrate all of the required unit content and skills.

The candidate will investigate the different types of business ownership and look at the different activities businesses can be involved in and what makes someone want to start their own business. The candidate will also learn about why businesses survive and/or fail.

The candidate will investigate the aims and objectives of businesses and why they are important. Businesses also have a number of stakeholders and the candidate will identify their particular interest in a business, looking at how they can influence a business and how it operates.

A key resource for any business is the people that they employ. The candidate will investigate the dynamic relationship which exists between employer and employee and how operating in enterprising ways can bring real benefits to businesses.

ICT is another important resource for any business. The candidate will investigate the impact of technology on business practice and how changes in ICT have changed the way in which a business develops.

Businesses are influenced by the uncertain environment in which they operate. The candidate will explore more fully the relationship between risk and reward that any aspiring business must consider and look at how businesses operate and act with regard to the external environment. The candidate will need to investigate the impact of economic conditions on business practice.

By the end of this unit the candidate, through investigating a range of local and/or national business contexts, should feel they have gained a valuable insight into how businesses act and how they are often affected by changes in the internal and external environment.

3.1.1 Business type – forms of ownership

There are several different types of business ownership.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify different types of ownership – sole trader, partnership, private limited company, public limited company, franchise, voluntary/charitable/not for profit;
- discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each form of ownership.

3.1.2 Business activity – why and how businesses start, succeed and/or fail

Businesses usually carry out a range of activities and are usually involved with producing goods, providing services or both.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify possible reasons why a business starts – e.g. to meet the needs of a particular target market, in response to an innovative idea, etc;
- identify types of activity a business may become involved in – e.g. manufacturing of goods (consumer and capital goods), retailing, provision of services (leisure, financial, communication), etc;
- explain possible changes in the external environment that can impact on these activities – e.g. economic factors such as the level of consumer spending on different goods and services, new competitors entering the market, etc;
- discuss the consequences of these changes in the external environment to business activity – e.g. success, failure, etc.

3.1.3 Framework for activity – aims, objectives and mission statements

For businesses to be successful, they must achieve the objectives (targets) and overall aims (goals) they set themselves. These can be summed up in the form of a mission statement.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify the main aims of businesses – e.g. making a profit, survival, growth, expansion, being competitive, being environmentally friendly, etc;
- explain the importance of business aims – e.g. gives businesses a framework to operate within, focus for business activity, etc;
- identify business objectives – e.g. selling more of a product than a competitor, providing more services than in the previous year, etc;
- explain the importance of business objectives – e.g. stepping stones in achieving an overall goal, setting of realistic targets for various departments, etc;
- explain the importance of mission statements – e.g. gives businesses something to aspire to, sets out a vision for a business, etc.

The candidate when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of aims, objectives and mission statements may in the external examination be asked to give an example of a business they have studied. The candidate may need to identify and explain their selected business's aims, objectives and/or mission statement.

3.1.4 Stakeholders - the differing interests

All businesses have stakeholders who take an interest in its decision-making process.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify different stakeholder groups in businesses – e.g. customers, suppliers, employees, employers, shareholders, local community, etc;
- explain different interests of stakeholder groups – e.g. suppliers – they sell goods/services to the business, financiers – they lend money and they want interest and repayment, etc;
- discuss possible conflicts between different types of stakeholder groups – e.g. employees wanting a pay rise higher than employer offering, etc;
- discuss consequences to businesses of not listening to stakeholder groups - e.g. impact on reputation, drop in repeat business, etc.

The candidate when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of stakeholders may in the external examination be asked to give an example of a business they have studied which has a number of stakeholder groups. The candidate may need to:

- explain the interest of different stakeholder groups;
- discuss a conflict that has occurred between two different stakeholder groups and;
- discuss the consequences to their chosen business of not listening to these stakeholder groups.

3.1.5 Employers/employees – how they operate in enterprising ways, develop their working relationships and meet their various rights and responsibilities

Today's workforce must be prepared to be that little more innovative and creative to stay that one step ahead of potential competitors.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify how employees can assist businesses operating in an enterprising way – e.g. suggestion schemes, working on new projects, being flexible in terms of their job, etc;
- explain how businesses can be seen to operate in enterprising ways – e.g. taking risks, being innovative in how they operate (commerce, working practices), etc;
- discuss the possible benefits to businesses of operating in an enterprising way – e.g. increased market share, increased sales and profits, improved reputation, etc.

Acting in an enterprising way is only one small part of the employee/employer relationship. In addition, the candidate must be able to:

- identify what employees expect from employers – e.g. suitable working conditions, contract of employment, equal opportunities, safe working conditions, etc;
- identify what employers expect from employees – e.g. punctuality, adherence to procedures, fulfilment of job role, complying with health and safety procedures, etc;
- explain the legal framework that employees/employers must operate within – e.g. The Employment Rights Act (1996 or as amended), The Sex Discrimination Act (1975 or as amended), The Race Relations Act (1976 or as amended), the Disability Discrimination Act (1995 or as amended), etc;
- discuss how employees and employers develop a good working relationship – e.g. meetings, appraisals, training, good communication, physical working environment and facilities, reward schemes such as employee of the month, etc;

The candidate when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the employee/employer relationship may in the external examination be asked to give an example of a business they have studied. The candidate may need to discuss how a good working relationship has been developed between employee and employer.

3.1.6 Changing use of ICT – in business and economic activities

Businesses can help themselves become more efficient by using the latest advances in technology in both their business and economic activities.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify different types of ICT – e.g. personal computers and networks, spreadsheets, word-processing, databases, Internet, e-commerce, email, etc;
- explain the purpose of ICT in business activities – e.g. to communicate, to produce spreadsheets to monitor stock levels, etc;
- explain the use of ICT in economic activities – e.g. e-commerce for on-line sales, accounting software, etc;
- discuss the potential benefits/drawbacks of upgrading ICT provision to a business – e.g. labour saving benefits, cost saving benefits, training of employees, paperless office, growth of e-commerce, etc.

The candidate when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the changing use of ICT may in the external examination be asked to give an example of a business they have studied. The candidate may need to discuss the potential benefits/drawbacks to this business of upgrading its current ICT provision.

3.1.7 Uncertainty – risk, reward and change

The environment businesses operate in is uncertain, challenging and dynamic. Often businesses must take risks; for example, make changes to their business practices in order to be rewarded in the long term.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify possible reasons why the business environment is uncertain – e.g. changing customer demands, changes in the economy etc.
- explain the ways in which businesses can change existing business practices to be successful – e.g. change of ownership, change of business activity etc.
- discuss the consequences to businesses of not making changes/taking risks – e.g. being left behind by competitors, losing market share, etc.

The candidate when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of risk, reward and change may in the external examination be asked to give an example of a business they have studied. The candidate may need to explain how it has changed its existing business practices to be more successful and discuss the consequences to their chosen business of not having made these changes.

3.1.8 Business within society – ethics and sustainability

Apart from the legal framework within which businesses must operate, they also need to be mindful of their ethical responsibility and the need to be sustainable.

The candidate must be able to:

- explain the meaning of ethics;
- explain the ways in which businesses can be seen to be operating in an ethical manner - e.g. producing goods that are fit for purpose, not exploiting workforce/child labour, etc;
- discuss the consequences to businesses of not operating in an ethical manner – e.g. bad publicity, poor reputation, etc;
- explain the meaning of sustainability;
- explain ways in which a business may act in order to achieve sustainability, e.g. agriculture, fossil fuels, etc.

The candidate when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the role of business within society may in the external examination be asked to give an example of a business they have studied and discuss how it can be seen to be operating in an ethical manner. The candidate may need to discuss the consequences to their chosen business of not behaving in this ethical manner.

3.1.9 Use of relevant terms, concepts and methods

However businesses manage their own activities, their success will depend on conditions in the economy as a whole. These conditions can affect businesses and how they behave.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify and describe a number of economic factors – e.g. interest rates, inflation, exchange rates, etc;
- discuss the possible impact of changes in such economic factors (both up and down) on business behaviour - e.g. an increase in interest rates means increased costs, etc;
- discuss how businesses can react to such changes in economic factors – e.g. an increase in interest rates may mean that a business has to look at saving money in other areas of the business, etc.

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3.2 Unit A242: *Making your mark in business*

Being successful is a key aim for most businesses. Staying one step ahead of competitors and listening to the target market are two key ingredients if a business is to survive and grow.

In this unit the candidate will be asked to carry out a range of activities which will enable them to develop their knowledge and understanding of the needs of a particular target market before producing an item of promotional material to meet these needs and ultimately making their chosen business more successful.

The candidate will need to develop knowledge and understanding of the importance of two key stakeholders - customers and competitors. The candidate will need to consider the actions businesses take in order to identify and respond to the needs of certain target markets and the actions of competitors. The candidate will also need to understand the role of research in identifying the needs of target markets and the features of the market within which a business operates. The candidate will need to understand the marketing mix and how parts of the mix can be combined to enable a business to respond to the needs of its target market and gain a competitive advantage over its rivals.

The candidate will develop skills in designing and conducting market research and then using the information collected to not only suggest ideas for how the business could better meet the needs of its target market and be more successful than its competitors but also go on to produce an item of promotional material.

There is also an opportunity for the candidate to develop a series of vocationally-related skills through their learning experience in this unit from developing and reviewing an action plan to reflecting on progress made to commenting on new skills acquired.

Building on the knowledge and understanding developed in Unit A241 and developing new skills in this unit, there is now the opportunity for the candidate to apply some of their knowledge and understanding in practice and make a mark in the business world.

The following sections contain the knowledge, understanding and skills which the candidate will need to acquire before choosing a scenario and researching their chosen business context.

3.2.1 Getting organised

The candidate will need to be familiar with action plan templates and must understand that although there are many different types of action plan, to be effective, it must contain the following key sections:

- identification of actions;
- explanation of how actions will be completed and by whom;
- time allocation for completion of actions.

The candidate will need to be able to create and then update their own personalised action plan during the course of this unit.

3.2.2 Understanding the market

The candidate will need to understand different forms of research to assist in analysing a particular market. The candidate will need to understand that primary or field research which they will carry out in a group could involve interviews, surveys, observation or questionnaires.

The candidate will need to understand that secondary or desk research is research using information provided by someone else, which may involve obtaining information from newspapers, magazines and the Internet.

3.2.3 Stakeholder interest

The candidate will need to develop their knowledge and understanding of two particular stakeholders – customers and competitors.

Customers:

The candidate will need to understand different types of customers and that different groups of customers, known as market segments, have different needs. The candidate will need to be able to identify the needs of a particular target market and respond to their particular customer needs.

The candidate must understand the main sources of customer power which include their purchasing power and their ability to choose to purchase from a number of competitors.

The candidate must understand the factors that are important to customers when considering whether to make a purchase. These factors include price, quality, value for money, pre- and after-sales service and the fulfilment of relevant consumer protection legislation by suppliers.

The candidate must understand the main methods used by business organisations to monitor levels of customer satisfaction. These methods include surveys, mystery shoppers and the amount of repeat custom.

The candidate will need to understand how good and poor customer satisfaction can have an impact on a business including impact on revenue, profits, market share and even long term survival.

Competitors:

The candidate must understand the methods which can be used to monitor the impact of competitors. These methods include market data, surveys and monitoring the actions of actual and potential competitors.

The candidate must understand the actions businesses can use to remain competitive. These actions include pricing strategies, promotional activities, the places where products are sold and the need to be innovative and creative.

The candidate must understand the consequences to a business of not being aware of competitor activity and taking appropriate action.

3.2.4 Presenting data effectively

The candidate will need to be able to present their research outcomes effectively and will therefore need to understand effective forms of presentation which may include written reports, short summaries, graphs, tables, etc.

3.2.5 The marketing mix/promoting an idea

The candidate will need to understand the main principles of marketing and its importance for business. This will require the candidate to understand the marketing mix or 4Ps:

- product – how the product can be modified to better meet the needs of customers;
- price – consider different strategies a business could use;
- place – how the business gets its product/services to the customer;
- promotion – strategies that a business can use to promote its products/services.

When suggesting how a business could better meet the needs of a particular target group the candidate will need to understand that certain parts of the mix can be combined to ensure customer needs are met.

The candidate must pay particular attention in this unit to promotional activity. The candidate will need to understand the reasons why a business promotes particular products and services.

The candidate must also be familiar with different forms of promotional activity including leaflets, posters, advertisements, story boards and radio jingles.

The candidate will not only be expected to produce an item of promotional material to meet the needs of a particular target market but they will also need to make a case for why a particular type of promotional material is being used and why it meets the needs of a particular target market.

3.2.6 Costing implications

Although not anticipated to be a key focus of this unit the candidate must still be able to consider the types of cost involved in producing certain types of promotion material.

Whilst the candidate is not expected to produce financial data they are still expected to have an understanding of scale, potential audience and resource implications for certain types of promotional campaign. For example considering the implications of a national advertising campaign on television verses a leaflet drop in the local area.

3.2.7 Reflection and review

The candidate will need to develop their analytical and evaluative skills during the course of the unit to prepare for the controlled assessment self-evaluation tasks.

The candidate will need to be able to reflect on their own performance in the unit as well as reflecting on the contribution of other members of the group.

3.2.8 Sourcing work

The candidate will need to know how to reference sources of information and compile a bibliography.

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3.3 Unit A243: *Working in business*

In Units A421 and A242, the candidate gained a valuable insight into a variety of businesses in action. The candidate investigated how businesses are set up and owned, who has an interest in them and how both the internal and external environment can affect business activity. The candidate went on to investigate a business of their choice and how to make it more successful in a particular context.

The aim of this unit is to investigate in more detail, the internal functions of businesses. The candidate will learn about the different ways businesses can be organised, the day-to-day work of different functional areas within businesses and some of the job roles involved at different levels in those areas. The candidate will also learn about how different functional areas work together and communicate with each other.

The candidate will be asked during the course of the examination to carry out a series of ‘in-tray exercises’ as they take responsibility for certain duties and tasks which would be required of a particular employee working in a particular functional area.

The candidate will benefit from a practical approach to this unit in order to provide them with the skills which they will require, should they go onto further study or straight into the world of work.

Please note:

- the finance functional area will always be covered in each examination paper. Other functional areas will be included as appropriate;
- the candidate will be answering questions in the examination paper from a number of different perspectives;
- the human resources functional area has not been included within this unit as it will form the basis of Unit A244 and the candidate’s subsequent investigations.

3.3.1 Business structure – how businesses organise themselves

As businesses grow they need to organise themselves and what they do. This helps businesses as a whole to make decisions and carry them out. Every business has its own way of structuring what it does and the functional areas that it needs.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify the different ways businesses can organise themselves – e.g. flat, hierarchical, matrix, by function, by geographical location, etc;
- explain the main features of each type of business organisation;
- discuss how these types of business organisation can affect the different functional areas of a business.

3.3.2 Job roles – key activities and responsibilities

Businesses employ people to work at different levels.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify the different levels of job roles which exist within a business – e.g. chief executive, chairman, directors, managers, supervisors and production operatives;
- explain key tasks and activities typically associated with each particular type of job role;
- discuss types of skills, qualifications and personal qualities required for each particular type of job role.

3.3.3 Working together

Employers and employees in different functional areas have to work together and communicate effectively with each other if businesses are to be successful.

The candidate must be able to:

- discuss how functional areas work together and how and why one functional area can/must assist another in completing a particular task;
- discuss how effective working relationships between functional areas can contribute to the success of businesses – e.g. achievement of common goals and objectives, improved efficiency, i.e. keep costs low, higher level of sales/production, targets being met, happier employees, etc;
- discuss how ineffective working relationships can cause major problems for businesses – e.g. poor performance, i.e. a downturn in sales and profits, poor customer service, poor quality service/product, etc.

3.3.4 Forms of communication

One of the key factors of a good working relationship between functional areas is the way in which they communicate and work together.

The candidate must be able to:

- identify and explain different forms of oral communication – e.g. telephones, meetings, etc;
- identify and explain different forms of written communication – e.g. memos, letters, notices, newsletters;
- identify and explain different forms of ICT communication – e.g. e-mail, powerpoint presentations, etc;
- discuss advantages and disadvantages of each of these communication methods and consider which would be the most appropriate form of communication in a given situation.

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3.3.5 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: Finance

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating their knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the Finance functional area.

The practical ‘in tray’ element

The candidate may be asked in the course of the external examination to:

- complete a sequence showing the documents involved when businesses buy or sell goods or services;
- complete a range of these documents;
- complete financial documents including profit and loss statements and cash-flow forecasts;
- construct a break-even chart from given data.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate must be able to:

- identify different methods by which employees can be paid – e.g. cash, cheques, bank transfers, Banks Automated Clearing System (BACS);
- explain the difference between gross and net pay and the deductions that are commonly made from gross pay;
- understand the layout of a payslip and be able to calculate gross and net pay from a given set of details;
- identify the purpose and sequence of each document involved when businesses buy or sell goods or services – e.g. purchase orders, delivery notes, goods received notes, invoices, credit notes, statements of account, remittance advice slips, payment methods (e.g. cash, cheques, debit/credit card, BACS), receipts, petty cash voucher;
- explain the procedures involved in making these payments – e.g. filling out the cash vouchers, cheques, getting authorisation from appropriate personnel;
- explain the time delay in some of these payment methods; understand how to complete each of the above documents accurately;
- discuss the importance of checking documents for errors and the implications of businesses not completing each document accurately;
- understand how to complete a profit and loss statement; calculate profit/loss; discuss the effects an increase or decrease in selling price, fixed costs and variable costs could have on the gross profit figure and net profit figure;

-
- discuss how a cash-flow forecast can help businesses in the decision making process;
 - understand how to complete a cash-flow forecast;
 - interpret a cash-flow forecast and discuss possible problems;
 - discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT to prepare financial statements such as cash-flow forecasts and profit and loss statements;
 - calculate the point at which a business activity breaks even using a break-even chart or formula;
 - understand how to construct and use a break-even chart to estimate the likely profitability of a business activity and to help make decisions about changing costs or revenues;
 - discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT to construct a break-even chart.
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3.3.6 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: Marketing and sales

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating their knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the Marketing and Sales functional area.

The practical ‘in tray’ element

The candidate may be asked in the course of the external examination to:

- suggest the most appropriate form of research for a given context;
- comment on a particular form of market research, suggesting improvements;
- from a given context, read an inaccurate advertisement and correct mistakes;
- put a series of tasks in a correct sequence;
- select the best version of an advertisement and justify selection;
- from company information, select appropriate highlights for a press release/promotion and justify details and best method of promotion;
- analyse data concerning past promotions and resulting sales levels, comment on trends and draw conclusions.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate must be able to:

- explain the purpose of market research;
- identify different types of primary (field) market research;
- identify different types of secondary (desk) market research;
- analyse and discuss market research data;
- suggest the most appropriate method of market research in a given context and explain associated benefits to a business;
- discuss how the results of market research can improve future performance in a business;
- identify and explain the different ways businesses can promote goods and services – e.g. television, radio, newspapers, sales promotions, etc;
- discuss the advantages and disadvantages and scrutinise different methods of promotion; suggest the most appropriate method of promotion in a given context;
- explain the key features of the Trade Descriptions Act, (1968 or as amended) and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA);
- analyse trends in promotional data concerning past promotions and resulting sales levels.

3.3.7 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: Administration and ICT

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating their knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the Administration and ICT functional area.

The practical ‘in tray’ element

The candidate may be asked in the course of the external examination to:

- comment on or compose a formal letter in response to a given context;
- comment on or compose an e-mail in response to a given context;
- comment on or compose a memorandum in response to a given context;
- comment on or compose a telephone message in response to a given context;
- discuss scenarios in relation to welcoming visitors to businesses – e.g. what would the employees need to consider – dress code, body language, manner and approach, etc;
- discuss improvements to a visitor information fact sheet;
- check records from a given context to ensure they are accurate;
- discuss how a record keeping system could work in a given context.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate must be able to:

- identify and explain the roles and responsibilities of someone working in this functional area – e.g. recording and distributing messages, organising meetings, responding to queries,
- produce spreadsheets, update databases etc;
- understand how to construct a simple letter, email, memorandum, or telephone message based on a context given;
- discuss what procedures are needed when welcoming visitors to a business;
- discuss the contents of a visitor information fact sheet;
- check records accurately and discuss record keeping systems;
- discuss the impact of the changing use of ICT on the working of this functional area.

3.3.8 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: Customer service

In this section, the candidate will be demonstrating their knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the customer service functional area.

The practical ‘in tray’ element

The candidate may be asked in the course of the external examination to:

- comment on how customer service could be improved in a given context;
- suggest how a particular customer complaint could be dealt with once provided with a particular context;
- respond to telephone calls or emails about enquiries or complaints;
- suggest examples of customer service that could meet the needs of a particular scenario;
- use data to examine records of customer satisfaction surveys, analyse and suggest improvements;
- discuss emergency procedures in relation to a given context.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The candidate must be able to:

- identify and explain the reasons why businesses need to keep their customers happy – e.g. gain customer satisfaction, win and keep customers, improve the reputation of the business;
- identify and explain a range of customer services – e.g. providing information, giving advice, seating areas, delivering goods, handling complaints;
- suggest examples of the type of information, advice that could be provided;
- understand how to write a message including a letter or email in response to a customer enquiry/complaint;
- explain emergency procedures that would be put in place in businesses;
- discuss how customer service could be improved in businesses;
- discuss the consequences to businesses of ineffective customer service;
- analyse customer service data.

3.3.9 Functional areas within businesses and associated activities: Production

In this unit, the candidate will be demonstrating their knowledge of some of the tasks associated with working in the Production functional area.

The practical ‘in tray’ element

The candidate may be asked in the course of the external examination to:

- suggest the most appropriate method of production in a given context;
- make an informed choice on the design of a new product to meet the needs of a target market based on research provided e.g. – choose between three methods and justify choice.

Knowledge and understanding

The candidate must be able to:

- identify and explain the different methods of production – e.g. flow, job, batch and cell;
- discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each production method;
- discuss the impact of advancing technology on production methods.

3.4 Unit A244: *Business and you*

Without doubt one of the key ingredients for any business to be successful is its workforce. Without enthusiastic, motivated employees businesses may never be able to realise their true potential. When recruiting new staff, businesses must take extra care to ensure that the right people are appointed to particular posts through a carefully considered recruitment and selection process.

In this unit, the candidate will gain a valuable insight into the recruitment and selection process from a number of different perspectives. To begin with, the candidate must select and then apply for one of the advertised posts in the controlled assessment booklet. The candidate will produce application documents in response to an advertised job role. The candidate will investigate and consider a number of key issues related to the recruitment and selection process.

The candidate will then be asked to produce an induction programme for new employees for their chosen context. This must contain information such as health and safety, rights and responsibilities, employee welfare and customer service.

Finally, the candidate will imagine that they have been in their chosen job role for a number of years. They are now looking for a promotion and will, therefore, be asked to investigate the skills required for a more supervisory position. They will need to prepare a training programme to develop the knowledge and skills to be successful.

This unit is an excellent opportunity for the candidate to start to think about the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in the workplace. They will come to realise, by the end of the unit, that employees are an important part of any business. Without them, businesses cannot function.

The following sections contain the knowledge, understanding and skills which the candidate will need to acquire before choosing a scenario and researching their chosen business context.

3.4.1 The Human Resources functional area

The Human Resources functional area is responsible for the needs of all of a businesses employers/employees. The candidate will need to understand that although employers/employees must take some responsibility for their own welfare at work, the Human Resources functional area has overall responsibility to ensure that procedures and best practice are in place.

The candidate will need to understand the main activities of the Human Resources functional area which include to:

- employ and maintain staff;
- ensure employees are trained as necessary in accordance with job role and business procedures;
- ensure the business follows procedures, laws and legislation;
- provide a safe working environment.

3.4.2 The recruitment process

The candidate will need to understand that when applying for any vacant job role in a business, applicants are required to complete particular recruitment documents in order to be considered for the job role.

The candidate must be able to:

- research various application documents such as application forms, CVs and letters of application;
- produce and complete these recruitment documents;
- understand and discuss the importance of completing these documents accurately, clearly, to a high standard and taking into account the legal framework.

3.4.3 The selection process

The candidate will need to understand that the selection process is vitally important to businesses to ensure they recruit the right people. The candidate will need to develop their understanding of some of the key features of any selection process. These include understanding:

- the shortlisting process – why, how applicants are shortlisted, e.g. against the requirements of the person/job specification;
- the interview process – appropriateness of interview questions, test, presentation, role of interview panel, overview of advertised post;
- what makes an effective interview from the perspective of employee and employer;
- legislation/laws that have to be adhered to during the selection process;
- various ways applicants are informed of interview outcome, e.g. successful/unsuccessful, written/verbal and opportunity for feedback.

3.4.4 Human resources legislation

The candidate will need to understand that businesses recruit and select staff using a variety of different methods. Whichever method is used, you will need to understand that businesses have to be mindful of the legislation that is in place when recruiting and selecting new staff. The candidate must understand how the following types of legislation protect employees and employers and be able to discuss the implications of such legislation for the recruitment and selection process:

- The Employment Rights Act (1996 or as amended);
- The Sex Discriminations Act (1975 or as amended);
- The Race Relations Act (1976 or as amended);
- The Disability Discrimination Act (1995 or as amended);
- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974 or as amended).

The candidate must have an overview of the key aspects of the legislation above.

3.4.5 Induction

The candidate will need to understand that it is in the interest of businesses to keep staff turnover low and to maintain good, motivated employees. In this section the candidate will need to:

- understand that the purpose of any induction plan is, for example, to help to settle new employees into a new job role;
- understand the contents of an effective induction programme including:
 - business background/history;
 - tour of building;
 - provided with a copy of the businesses health and safety procedure and security policy;
 - working hours/breaks;
 - rights and responsibilities as an employee;
 - details of what on-the-job training will be given.

3.4.6 Promotion – training, skills, competencies required

The candidate will need to understand that it is important for businesses to recognise potential in existing employees and to encourage them to improve on their professional development which may, one day, lead them to promotion.

The candidate will need to understand:

- what skills and competencies are required for a promotion;
- what the job entails, day-to-day activities and why/how these are different to other job roles;
- additional training involved;
- different types of training programmes and their key features;
- types of costs involved in these training programmes and the time impact for businesses.

3.4.7 Effective research

The candidate will need to understand different forms of research to assist in understanding key aspects of the recruitment and selection process. The candidate will need to understand that primary or field research which they will carry out could involve interviews or observation.

The candidate will need to understand that secondary or desk research is research using information provided by someone else, which may involve obtaining information from newspapers, magazines and the Internet.

4 Schemes of Assessment

4.1 GCSE (Single Award) Scheme of Assessment

GCSE (Single Award) in Applied Business (J213)

Unit A241: *Business in action*

40% of the total GCSE (Single Award) marks

1.5 hrs Written Paper

80 marks

This question paper has four/five questions.

Candidates will answer all questions.

This unit is externally assessed.

Unit A242: *Making your mark in business*

60% of the total GCSE (Single Award) marks

Controlled Assessment (Up to 30 hours research and up to 15 hours writing up)

60 marks

Candidates will choose a business scenario from a list of five scenarios and then choose a local business on which to base their subsequent investigations.

Candidates complete all tasks.

This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

4.2 GCSE (Double Award) Scheme of Assessment

GCSE (Double Award) in Applied Business (J226)

GCSE (Single Award) units as above, Unit A241 being 20% and Unit A242 being 30% of the total GCSE (Double Award) marks.

Unit A243: *Working in business*

20% of the total GCSE (Double Award) marks

This question paper has four/five questions.

1 hr 30 mins Written Paper

Candidates will answer all questions.

80 marks

This unit is externally assessed.

Unit A244: *Business and you*

30% of the total GCSE (Double Award) marks

Candidates will choose one job role from a list of five and investigate a range of human resource activities in relation to this role.

Controlled Assessment (Up to 30 hours research and up to 15 hours writing up)

Candidates complete all tasks.

60 marks

This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

4.3 Entry Options

GCSE (Single Award) candidates must be entered for units A241 and A242.

GCSE (Double Award) candidates must be entered for all four units.

Candidates must be entered for certification to claim their overall GCSE qualification grade. All candidates should be entered under the following certification codes:

OCR GCSE in Applied Business – J213;

OCR GCSE (Double Award) in Applied Business – J226.

4.4 Tiers

This scheme of assessment is untiered, covering all of the ability range grades from A* to G (A*A* to GG). Candidates achieving less than the minimum mark for Grade G (GG) will be ungraded.

4.5 Assessment Availability

There are two examination series each year, in January and June.

Assessment availability can be summarised as follows:

Unit	January 2010	June 2010	January 2011	June 2011	January 2012 etc
A241	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A242	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A243	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A244	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

4.6 Assessment Objectives

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1 Demonstrate Knowledge and Understanding

- recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology

AO2 Analysis, Evaluation and Application

- apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks

AO3 Communication and Presentation

- analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions

AO weightings – GCSE (Single Award)

The relationship between the components and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid.

Unit	% of GCSE (Single Award)			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A241: <i>Business in action</i>	18	16	6	40%
Unit A241: <i>Making your mark in business</i>	16	24	20	60%
	34%	40%	26%	100%

AO weightings – GCSE (Double Award)

The relationship between the components and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid.

Unit	% of GCSE (Double Award)			Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	
Unit A241: <i>Business in action</i>	9	8	3	20%
Unit A242: <i>Making your mark in business</i>	8	12	10	30%
Unit A243: <i>Working in business</i>	9	8	3	20%
Unit A244: <i>Business and you</i>	8	12	10	30%
	34%	40%	26%	100%

4.7 Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in all units.

Candidates are expected to:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear;
- present information in a form that suits its purpose;
- use a suitable structure and style of writing.

In internally assessed units A242 and A244 criteria for assessing quality of written communication will appear in the marking criteria for controlled assessments. It will be embedded in the marking criteria for one particular assessment objective for each unit where it is considered to be most appropriate.

In externally assessed units A241 and A243 quality of written communication will be embedded in one levels of response question containing each of the three assessment objectives. The question which carries quality of written communication will be the one that is considered most appropriate and will change session on session. The criteria for assessing quality of written communication will be outlined in specific instructions at the front of each mark scheme for a particular examination series.

5 Controlled Assessment

5.1 The controlled assessment units

Units A242 and A244 have been designed to be internally assessed and externally moderated, applying the principles of controlled assessment. Controls are set within the assessments so that validity and reliability are ensured and the assessors can confidently authenticate the candidate's work. These controls take a variety of forms in each of the stages of the assessment process: task setting, task taking and task marking. There are different levels of control within each of these three stages. This section sets out the overall OCR approach for this GCSE. Further clarification can be found in the specimen controlled assessment material for each of the two units.

5.2 Task setting

5.2.1 The OCR approach

For this GCSE in Applied Business OCR will assume a high level of control with regard to task setting. A number of scenarios/contexts will be available from OCR for the controlled assessment units. Once a scenario/context has been chosen then the candidate will carry out necessary research in order to respond to a series of tasks. These tasks have been designed to meet the full assessment requirements of the unit. It is important that before the candidate begins the assessment they are equipped with the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills which are specified in each of the unit specifications for Units A242 and A244.

5.2.2 Using controlled assessment tasks

Unit A242 – The candidate must choose one business scenario from a list of five and then choose a local business on which to base their subsequent investigations. The series of tasks which the candidate must complete are supplied by OCR. It should be noted that the types of business scenario have been chosen to be as wide ranging as possible to suit all centre requirements.

Unit A244 – The candidate must choose one job role from a list of five and investigate a range of human resource activities in relation to this role. The series of tasks which the candidate must complete are supplied by OCR. It should be noted that the types of job roles have been chosen to be as wide ranging as possible to suit all centre requirements.

Live OCR controlled assessment material must **NOT** be used as practice material. Centres should devise their own practice material or use the **specimen** controlled assessment material.

5.3 Task taking

5.3.1 The OCR approach

For this GCSE in Applied Business OCR will assume a medium level of control with regard to task taking. There will be a limited level of control for research and a high level of control for the write up of the candidate's findings. The task taking parameters will be defined for several key controls and the remainder set by centres as outlined below.

5.3.2 Definitions of the controls

(a) **Authenticity control:** The candidate can complete the research individually or in a group without direct teacher supervision. In Unit A242, the candidate **MUST** carry out both individual and group research. The write up of findings and responding to tasks must be completed individually and under direct supervision. The teacher must be able to authenticate the work.

(b) **Feedback control:** Feedback to the candidate will be permissible but tightly defined. Within this specification OCR expects teachers to equip the candidate with the knowledge, understanding and skills which they will need before they respond to the tasks. It should be remembered that the candidate is required to reach their own judgements and conclusions without any guidance or assistance from others. When supervising tasks, teachers are expected to:

- exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism;
- exercise continuing supervision of practical work to ensure essential compliance with Health and Safety requirements;
- ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

(c) **Time control:** The overall time limits available to the candidate to complete the controlled assessment are specified in section 4.1 of this specification. A more detailed breakdown of time limits for particular tasks is contained in the specimen controlled assessment material for Units A242 and A244.

Tasks should be completed within the time limit set and supervised and marked by the teacher. Some of the work, by its very nature, may be undertaken outside the centre, e.g. research work etc. The use and application of the research material will be undertaken under direct teacher supervision. With all internally assessed work, the teacher must be satisfied that the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own work and be able to authenticate it using the specified procedure in section 5.4.4.

(d) **Collaboration control:** Group work is permissible in some cases for the research phase of the units. However, the candidate must respond to the tasks individually. Where group work is

suggested as an alternative to individual work the candidate will still be analysing the outcome of the group work on an individual basis before forming their own conclusions.

(e) **Resource control:** Access to resources will be limited to those appropriate to the task and as required by the unit. The candidate will need to be provided with the most appropriate materials and equipment to allow them full access to the marking criteria but this must be closely monitored and supervised, especially the level of ICT access. During the write up the candidate should only have access to the notes which they have made during the research phase of task taking. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that these are only research notes and that they do not include a draft or final version of the tasks.

5.3.3 Quality assuring the controls

It is the responsibility of the Head of centre to ensure that the controls set out in the specification and the individual units are imposed.

5.3.4 Completing the tasks

The candidate will be provided with sufficient time to complete all of the tasks. It is suggested that evidence is produced in a number of sessions, each focussing on a specific mini-task.

Each candidate must produce individual and authentic evidence for each of the (mini) tasks. It is particularly important that those candidates who conducted research as part of the group still produce individual evidence.

The teacher may give appropriate support and guidance to the candidate during the research phase of these units but not during the write up phase. This support and guidance should focus on checking that the candidate understands what is expected of them. It is not acceptable for the teacher to provide model responses or to work through answers in detail.

The candidate will have the opportunity to use information from a wide range of resources as part of their research time in Units A242 and A244. This research will help the candidate to produce evidence which is clearly targeted to meeting the assessment requirements of each of the tasks. It is not permissible, however, for the candidate to introduce any new material into their evidence that is not accessed during this research time and teachers must safeguard against this.

The candidate must also be guided on the use of information to ensure that confidentiality and intellectual property rights are maintained at all times. It is essential that any material directly used from a source is appropriately and rigorously referenced and in both Units A242 and A244 the candidate will be asked to complete a bibliography during their research time which will be required for review at the point of internal assessment and external moderation,

5.3.5 Presentation of work

Candidates must observe certain procedures in the production of controlled assessments.

- Charts, graphs, images and tables may be produced using appropriate ICT. These should be inserted into the candidate's evidence at the appropriate place.
- Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged.
- Quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible.
- Work submitted for moderation or marking must be marked with the:

centre number;

centre name;

candidate number;

candidate name;

unit code and title.

Work submitted on paper for moderation must be secured by treasury tags. Work submitted in digital format (CD or online) must be in a suitable file structure as shown in Appendix B.

5.4 Task marking

5.4.1 The OCR approach

For this GCSE in Applied Business OCR will assume a medium level of control with regard to task marking. For Units A242 and A244 OCR will assume a medium to high level of control in relation to the marking of tasks. All controlled assessed units will be marked by the centre assessor(s) using awarding body marking grids and guidance and moderated by the OCR appointed moderator. For this GCSE controlled assessment can be submitted for postal moderation or uploaded to the OCR Repository.

5.4.2 Applying the assessment criteria

The marking criteria detail the skills, knowledge and understanding which the candidate is required to demonstrate.

5.4.3 Use of ‘best fit’ approach to marking grids

The (mini) task should be marked by the teacher according to the given marking criteria using a ‘best fit’ approach. For each of the (mini) tasks, the assessor should select the descriptors, provided in the marking grid, which most closely describe the quality of work being marked.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks **must be** directly related to the marking criteria.

Teachers use their professional judgement in selecting the descriptor which best describes the work of the candidate.

To select the most appropriate mark within this descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the candidate’s work *convincingly* meets the descriptor, the higher marks in the mark range should be awarded;
- where the candidate’s work *adequately* meets the descriptor, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded;
- where the candidate’s work *just* meets the descriptor, the lower marks in the mark range should be awarded.

The final mark for the candidate for each unit is out of a total of 60 and is found by totalling the marks for each of the (mini) tasks.

5.4.4 Authentication

Teachers must be confident that the work they mark is the candidate’s own. This does not mean that a candidate must be supervised throughout the completion of all work but the teacher/course tutor must exercise sufficient supervision, or introduce sufficient checks, to be in a position to judge the authenticity of the candidate’s work.

The candidate must not plagiarise. Plagiarism is the submission of another’s work as one’s own and/or failure to acknowledge the source correctly. Plagiarism is considered to be malpractice and could lead to the candidate being disqualified. Plagiarism sometimes occurs innocently when the candidate is unaware of the need to reference or acknowledge their sources. It is therefore important that centres ensure that the candidate understands that the work they submit must be their own and that they understand the meaning of plagiarism and what penalties may be applied. The candidate may refer to research, quotations or evidence but they must list their sources. The rewards from acknowledging sources, and the credit they will gain from doing so, should be emphasised to the candidate as well as the potential risks of failing to acknowledge such material. The candidate must sign a declaration to this effect. Centres should reinforce this message to ensure the candidate understands what is expected of them.

Please note: Centres must confirm to OCR that the evidence produced by the candidate is authentic. The Centre Authentication Form includes a declaration for assessors to sign. It is a

requirement of the QCA Common Criteria for all Qualifications that proof of authentication is received.

5.4.5 Internal standardisation

It is important that all internal assessors, working in the same subject area, work to common standards. Centres must ensure that the internal standardisation of marks across assessors and teaching groups takes place using an appropriate procedure.

This can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In subsequent years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. Centres are advised to hold preliminary meetings of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will enable final adjustments to be made.

5.4.6 Moderation

All work is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks are then submitted to OCR, after which moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures: refer to the OCR website for submission dates of the marks to OCR. The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the standard of the award of marks for work is the same for each centre and that each teacher has applied the standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

The sample of work which is presented to the Moderator for moderation must show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria.

Each candidate's work should have a cover sheet attached to it with a summary of the marks awarded. If the work is to be submitted in digital format this cover sheet should also be submitted electronically within each of the candidate's files.

5.5 Minimum Requirements for Controlled Assessment

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced.

If a candidate submits no work for an internally assessed component, then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that component on the mark sheets submitted to OCR. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed component, then the work should be assessed according to the internal assessment objectives and marking instructions and the appropriate mark awarded, which may be zero.

6 Technical Information

6.1 Making Unit Entries

Please note that centres must be registered with OCR in order to make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become a registered centre well in advance of making their first entries. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms and/or moderator details for controlled assessments.

It is essential that unit entry codes are quoted in all correspondence with OCR.

Unit entry code	Component code	Submission method	Unit titles
A241	-	-	Business in action
A242	/01	<i>Postal Moderation</i>	Making your mark in business
	/02	<i>OCR Repository</i>	
A243	-	-	Working in business
A244	/01	<i>Postal Moderation</i>	Business and you
	/02	<i>OCR Repository</i>	

6.2 Terminal Rules

Candidates must take at least 40% of the assessment in the same series they enter for either single award or double award qualification certification.

Units can be taken in any order as long as the terminal rules are satisfied.

6.3 Unit and Qualification Re-sits

Candidates may re-sit each unit once before entering for certification for a GCSE or GCSE (Double Award).

Candidates may enter for either qualification an unlimited number of times.

6.4 Making Qualification Entries

Candidates must enter for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is **not** made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Candidates may enter for:

- GCSE certification (entry code J213);
- GCSE (Double Award) certification (entry code J226).

A candidate who has completed all the units required for the qualification must enter for certification in the same examination series in which the terminal rules are satisfied.

GCSE certification is available from June 2011.

GCSE (Double Award) certification is available from June 2011.

6.5 Grading

Both GCSE (Single Award) and GCSE (Double Award) results are awarded on the scale A*-G (A*A* to GG). Units are awarded a* to g. Grades are awarded on certificates. However, results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G, GG or g) will be recorded as *unclassified* (U or u) and this is **not** certificated.

In unitised schemes candidates can take units across several different series provided the terminal rules are satisfied. They can also re-sit units or choose from optional units available. When working out candidates' overall grades OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries have been set, and between different units. OCR uses uniform marks to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark is calculated from the candidate's raw marks. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the candidate's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit e.g. 41/80.

The specification is graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. The uniform mark thresholds for each of the assessments are shown below:

(GCSE) Unit Weighting	Maximum Unit Uniform Mark	Unit Grade								
		a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
30%	120	108	96	84	72	60	48	36	24	0
20%	80	72	64	56	48	40	32	24	16	0

Candidate's uniform marks for each module are aggregated and grades for the specification are generated on the following scales.

Qualification	Max UMS	Qualification Grade								
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
GCSE (Single Award)	200	180	160	140	120	100	80	60	40	0

Qual	Max UMS	Qualification Grade														
		A*A*	A*A	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE	EF	FF	FG	GG
GCSE (Double Award)	400	360	340	320	300	280	260	240	220	200	180	160	140	120	100	80

Awarding Grades

The written papers will have a total weighting of 40% and controlled assessment a weighting of 60%.

A candidate's uniform mark for each paper will be combined with the uniform mark for each controlled assessment to give a total uniform mark for the specification. The candidate's grade will be determined by the total uniform mark.

6.6 Result Enquiries and Appeals

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the grade available to one or more candidates or to submit an appeal against an outcome of such an enquiry. Enquiries about unit results must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken.

For procedures relating to enquiries on results and appeals, centres should consult the *Administrative Guide for General Qualifications* and the document *Enquiries about Results and*

Appeals – Information and Guidance for Centres produced by the Joint Council. Copies of the most recent editions of these papers can be obtained from OCR.

6.7 Shelf-Life of Units

Individual unit results, prior to certification of the qualification, have a shelf-life limited only by that of the qualification.

6.8 Guided Learning Hours

GCSE (Single Award) in Applied Business requires 120-140 guided learning hours in total.

GCSE (Double Award) in Applied Business requires 240-280 guided learning hours in total.

6.9 Code of Practice/Subject Criteria/Common Criteria Requirements

These specifications comply in all respects with the current *GCSE, GCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice* as available from the QCA website, the subject criteria for GCSE Business related subjects and *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*.

6.10 Prohibited Qualifications and Classification Code

Candidates who enter for the OCR GCSE specifications may not also enter for any other GCSE specification with the certification title *Applied Business* in the same examination series.

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

The classification code for these specifications is 0002.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables.

6.11 Disability Discrimination Act Information Relating to this Specification

GCSEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualifications and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments and to demonstrate what they know and can do. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council www.jcq.org.uk.

For the internally assessed units, Units A242 and A244, the expectation is that the candidate presents the outcome(s) of their research in a written format. This written format can take on a variety of forms, details of which are found in each of the two units. There is no requirement for evidence to be presented in an oral presentation

Candidates who are unable to access part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Candidates with a visual impairment may find this subject difficult to access fully.

6.12 Arrangements for Candidates with Particular Requirements

Candidates who are not disabled under the terms of the DDA may be eligible for access arrangements to enable them to demonstrate what they know and can do. Candidates who have been fully prepared for the assessment but who are ill at the time of the examination, or are too ill to take part of the assessment, may be eligible for special consideration. Centres should consult the *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council.

6.13 OCR Repository

The OCR Repository allows centres to store controlled assessment electronically and to submit their moderation sample in electronic format.

The OCR GCSE Applied Business units A242 and A244 can be submitted electronically: please check Section 6.1 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

More information on the OCR Repository can be found in Appendix B: Guidance for the Production of Electronic Controlled Assessments.

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7 Other Specification Issues

7.1 Overlap with other Qualifications

There is a degree of overlap between the content of this specification and those for GCSE in Business, GCSE Business and Communication Systems, OCR Nationals Level 1 in Business and ICT, OCR Level 2 Nationals in Business and the Business, Administration and Finance Diploma.

7.2 Progression from these Qualifications

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Progression to further study from GCSE will depend upon the number and nature of the grades achieved. Broadly, candidates who are awarded mainly Grades D to G at GCSE could either strengthen their base through further study of qualifications at Level 1 within the National Qualifications Framework or could proceed to Level 2. Candidates who are awarded mainly Grades A* to C at GCSE would be well prepared for study at Level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework.

7.3 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Economic and Cultural Issues

These specifications offer opportunities which can contribute to an understanding of these issues in the following units:

Unit	Spiritual	Moral	Ethical	Social	Legislative	Economic	Cultural
A241	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
A242	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X
A243	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
A244	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓

7.4 Sustainable Development, Health and Safety Considerations and European Developments, consistent with international agreements

These specifications support these issues, consistent with current EU agreements, in the following units:

Unit	Sustainable Development	Health and Safety Considerations	European Developments
A241	✓	X	X
A242	✓	✓	X
A243	X	✓	X
A244	X	✓	X

7.5 Avoidance of Bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of these specifications and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

7.6 Language

These specifications and associated assessment materials are in English only.

7.7 Key Skills

This specification provides opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance and Problem Solving* at Levels 1 and/or 2. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 1 and/or 2 for each unit.

Unit	C		AoN		IT		WwO		IoLP		PS	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
A241												
A242	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A243			✓	✓							✓	✓
A244	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

Detailed opportunities for generating Key Skills evidence through this specification are posted on the OCR website (www.ocr.org.uk). A summary document for Key Skills Coordinators showing ways in which opportunities for Key Skills arise within GCSE courses has been published.

7.8 ICT

In order to play a full part in modern society, candidates need to be confident and effective users of ICT. Where appropriate, candidates should be given opportunities to use ICT in order to further their study of Applied Business.

The assessment of this course provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- research a particular business context using a variety of research methods, some of which may be ICT based.

There is also the opportunity for candidates to produce their evidence for Units A242 and A244 with the assistance of ICT.

7.9 Citizenship

Since September 2002, the National Curriculum for England at Key Stage 4 has included a mandatory programme of study for Citizenship. Parts of this Programme of Study may be delivered through an appropriate treatment of other subjects.

This section offers guidance on opportunities for developing knowledge, skills and understanding of citizenship issues during the course. These opportunities are also indicated within the content of:

Candidates should be able to:

- question and reflect on different ideas, opinions, assumptions, beliefs and values;
- research and undertake enquiries into issues and problems, using a range of information, sources and methods;

- interpret and analyse critical sources used;
- evaluate different viewpoints, exploring connections and relationships between different viewpoints and actions in different contexts.

This specification will provide candidates with the opportunity to:

- work individually and in groups;
- take into account legal, moral, economic, environmental and social dimensions of different problems and issues;
- use and interpret different media and ICT both as sources of information and as a means of communicating ideas.

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Appendix A: Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment may be balanced by better performance in others.

The grade descriptors have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

Grade F

Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some basic aspects of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They communicate their ideas using everyday language. They use some basic business terminology.

They carry out straightforward investigations and tasks using a limited range of skills. They apply some knowledge and understanding to select and organise basic information from a limited range of sources to investigate business organisations.

They identify some evidence to analyse problems and issues and make judgements. They present simple conclusions that are sometimes supported by evidence.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They use business terminology appropriately.

They plan and carry out investigations and tasks using a range of skills appropriately. They apply their knowledge and understanding to select and organise relevant information from a variety of sources to investigate business organisations in different contexts.

They use and evaluate evidence to analyse problems and issues with some accuracy, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions that are supported by evidence.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They understand and use business terminology accurately and appropriately.

They plan and carry out effectively a range of investigations and tasks using a wide range of skills competently. They apply their knowledge and critical understanding effectively to select and organise information from a wide range of sources, and to investigate business organisations in a variety of contexts.

They use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative evidence effectively with a high degree of accuracy to analyse problems and issues, and make informed and reasoned judgements to present reasoned and substantiated conclusions.

Appendix B: Guidance for the Production of Controlled Assessments

Structure for evidence

A Controlled Assessment portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the candidate's evidence. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index, called 'Home Page.'

There should be a top level folder detailing the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the Unit code A242/A244, so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate's Controlled Assessment portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the centre network. Prior to submitting the Controlled Assessment portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing Controlled Assessment and summary forms.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues it will be necessary to save candidates' work using an appropriate file format. (Further information on this topic is provided in the separate OCR guidance on digital Controlled Assessment submissions.)

Candidates must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.

Electronic Controlled Assessment is designed to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using current technology. Candidates do not gain marks for using more sophisticated formats or for using a range of formats. A candidate who chooses to use only word documents will not be disadvantaged by that choice.

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, digital photos and digital video.

To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed below. Word processed documents or PowerPoint presentations must be converted to HTML or PDF formats before submission. OCR will not accept compressed (zipped) file formats. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, OCR will provide further guidance.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each candidate.

Accepted File Formats

Movie formats for digital video evidence

MPEG (*.mpg)

QuickTime movie (*.mov)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)

Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)

Flash (*.swf)

Windows Media File (*.wmf)

MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)

Audio or sound formats

MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)

Graphics formats including photographic evidence

JPEG (*.jpg)

Graphics file (*.pcx)

MS bitmap (*.bmp)

GIF images (*.gif)

Animation formats

Macromedia Flash (*.fla)

Structured markup formats

HTML (*html, *htm)

XML (*xml)

CSS (*css)

XSL (*xsl/*xsIt)

Text formats

PDF (.pdf)

Please consult OCR guidance on digital Controlled Assessment submissions for advice on compatibility of versions of these file formats.